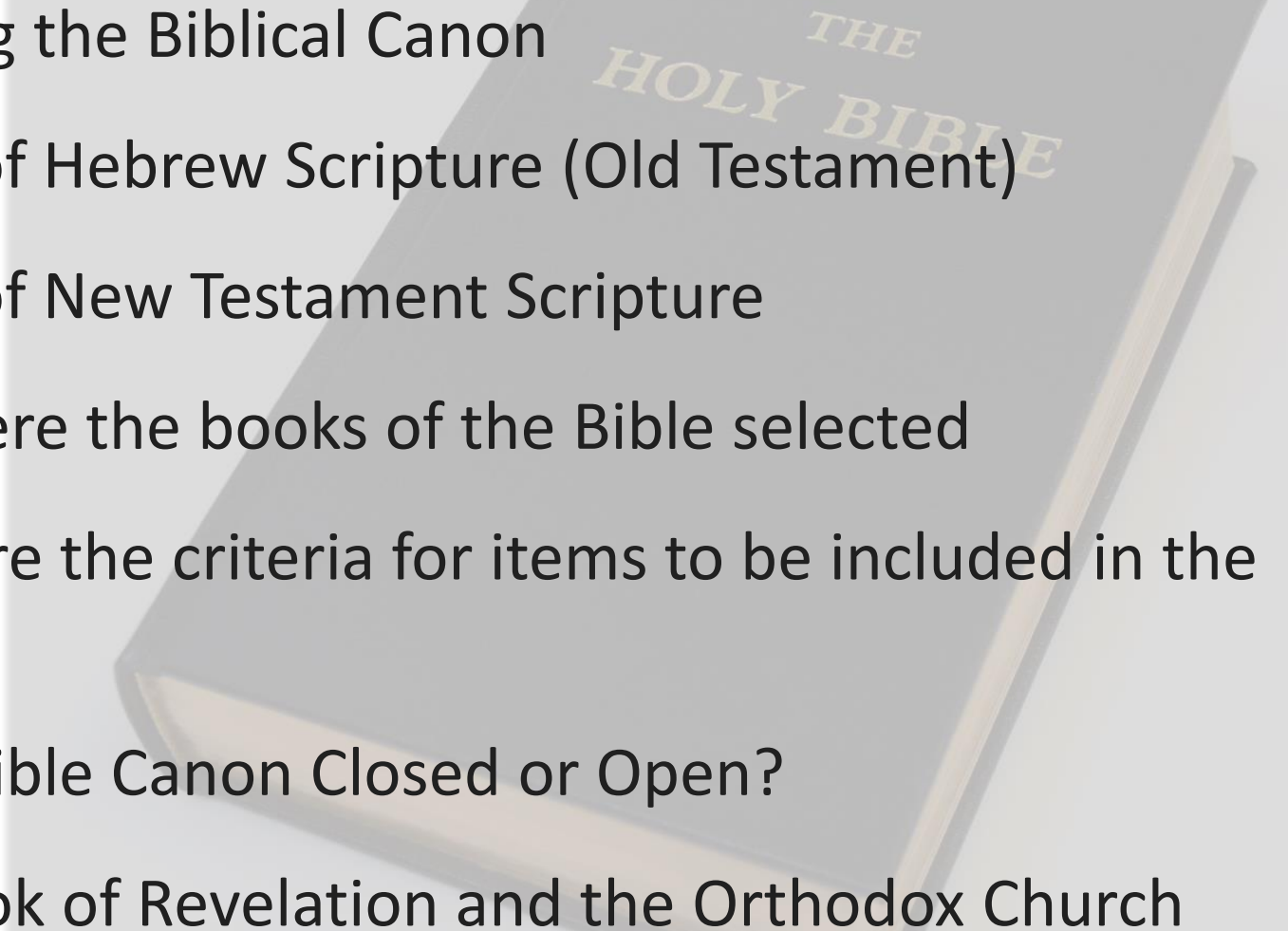


Origin and History of the Bible





OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon
 2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)
 3. Origin of New Testament Scripture
 4. How were the books of the Bible selected
 5. What are the criteria for items to be included in the Bible?
 6. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?
 7. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church
- 

fake news

Bible Origin Myths

- Descended from Heaven on Golden Plates
- Decided at the Council of Nicea and enforced by fiat of Emperor Constantine
- Established by one of the Holy Fathers of the Church, such as Tertullian, Athansios, or Jerome.
- Council or Papal declaration in the Middle Ages



OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon

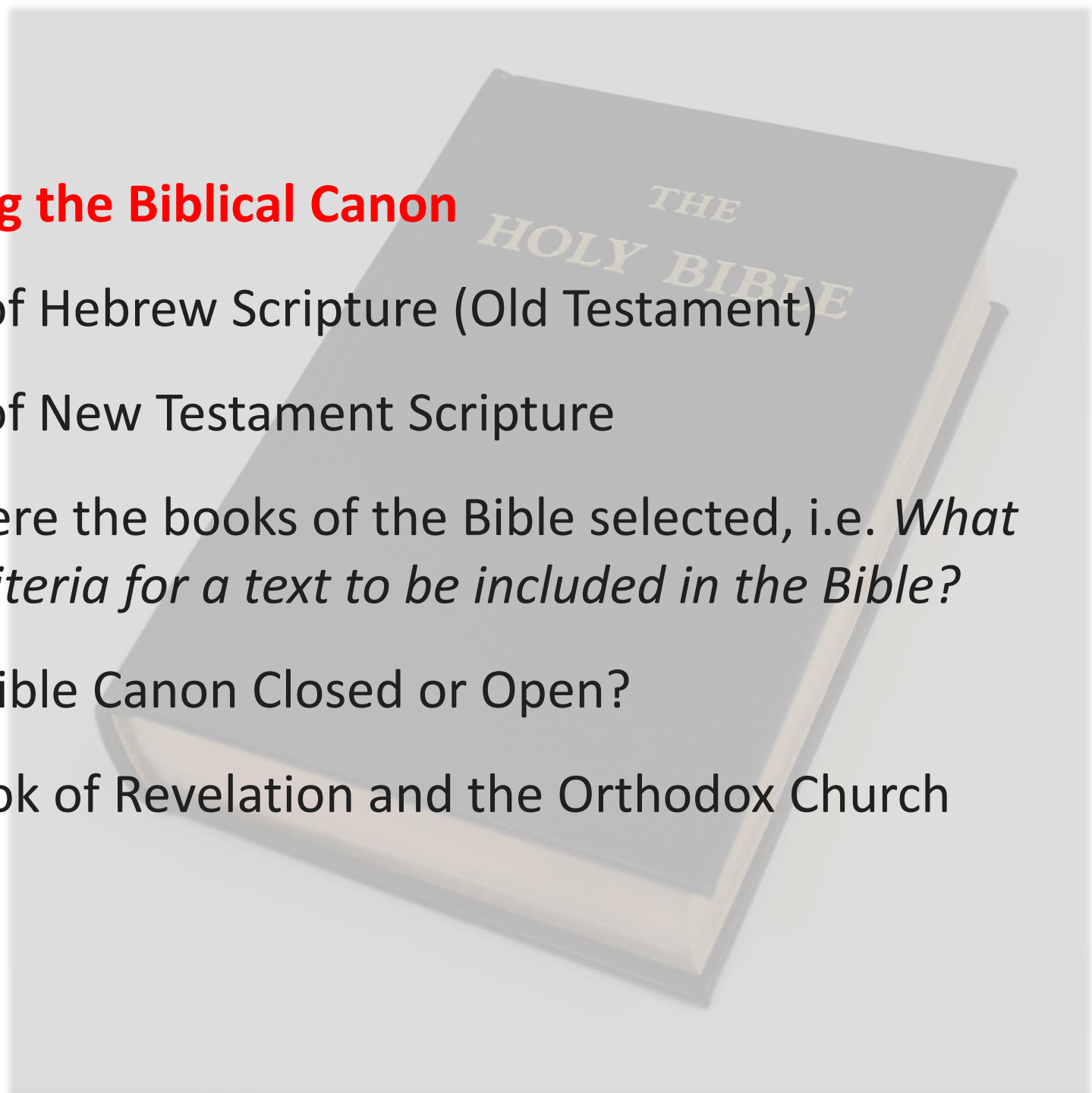
2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)

3. Origin of New Testament Scripture

4. How were the books of the Bible selected, i.e. *What are the criteria for a text to be included in the Bible?*

5. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?

6. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church





Defining Biblical (Scriptural) Canon

DEFINITION

The biblical canon is the collection of scriptural books written by men who were inspired by God and given to His people.

They are unique by their divine qualities, reception by the People of God, and their apostolic connection, either by authorship or association.

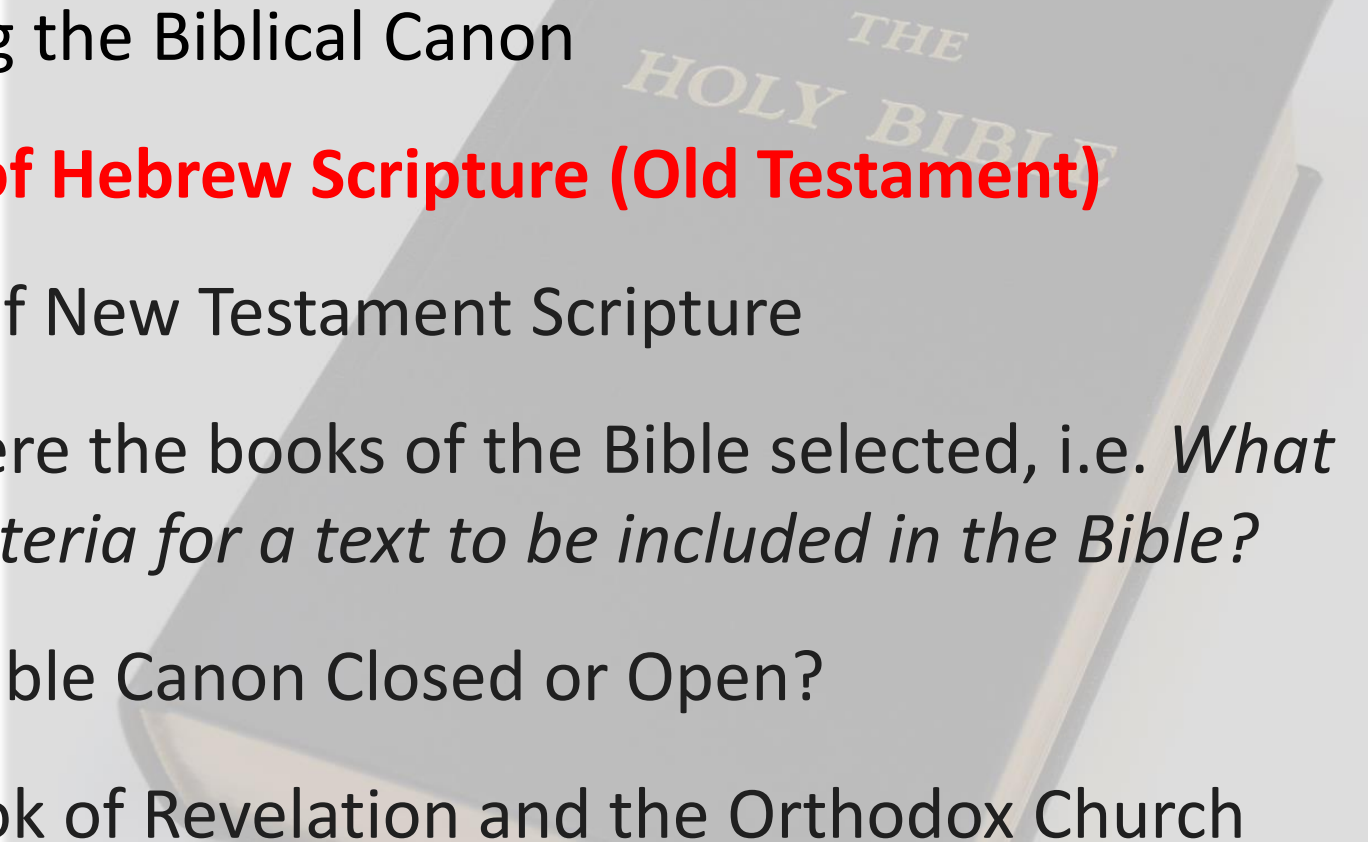
The biblical canon was grouped together by God's people post-Exodus with the OT being fairly stable (i.e closed) by the birth of Christ.

There was not common agreement until the 4th century for the books which make up the NT Canon.

There is still no universal agreement among Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant about the actual number of books in the Biblical Canon.



OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon
 - 2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)**
 3. Origin of New Testament Scripture
 4. How were the books of the Bible selected, i.e. *What are the criteria for a text to be included in the Bible?*
 5. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?
 6. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church
- 

Hebrew Scripture TaNaKh

Tanakh is an acronym from the medieval era
The original Hebrew terms was “Mikra” which
meant simply "the reading”

It represents the first Hebrew letter of each of the
traditional subdivisions:

- Torah (Teaching, AKA - the Five Books of Moses),
- Nevi'im (Prophets)
- Ketuvim (Writings)



Canon of Hebrew Scripture

It is widely accepted that the process of canonization of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament) occurred over the course of several centuries, most likely between 200 BCE - 200 CE.

<u>LAW</u>		<u>PROPHETS</u>	<u>WRITINGS</u>		
Genesis	<i>Former Prophets</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joshua Judges 1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings 	Psalms		
Exodus			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isaiah Jeremiah Ezekiel The Twelve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job Proverbs Ruth Song of Songs Ecclesiastes 	
Leviticus					<i>Pre-Exilic Writings</i>
Numbers					
Deuteronomy					<i>Latter Prophets</i>

The Jewish Oral Tradition

The books of the Tanakh were passed on by each generation and, according to rabbinic tradition, were accompanied by an oral tradition comprised of the:

Talmud

Mishnah

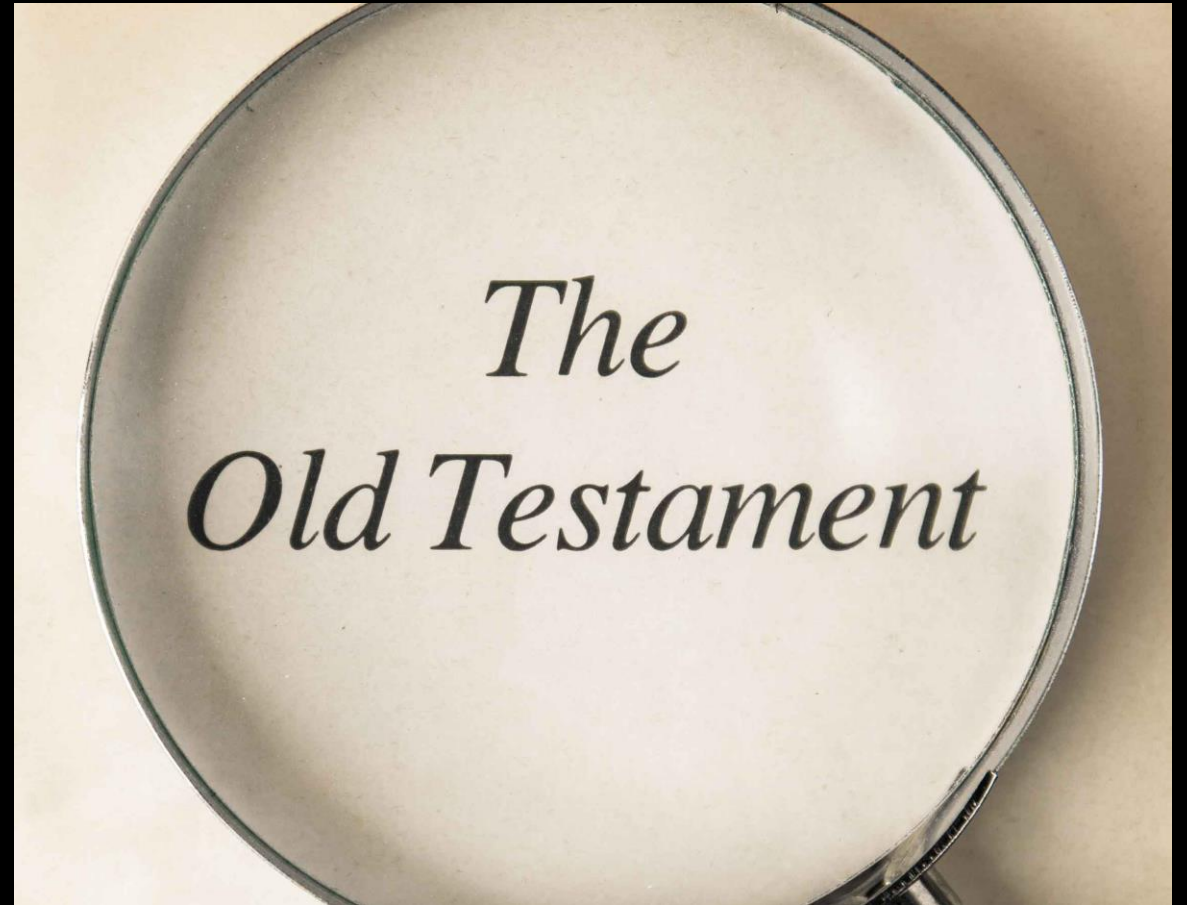
Gemara

As in the Orthodox Church, oral traditions are important as they suggest that the OT canon was defined as early as 450 BC.



Historical Sources of the Old Testament

- Masoretic Text
- Leningrad Codex
- Septuagint
- Dead Sea Scrolls



Masoretic Text

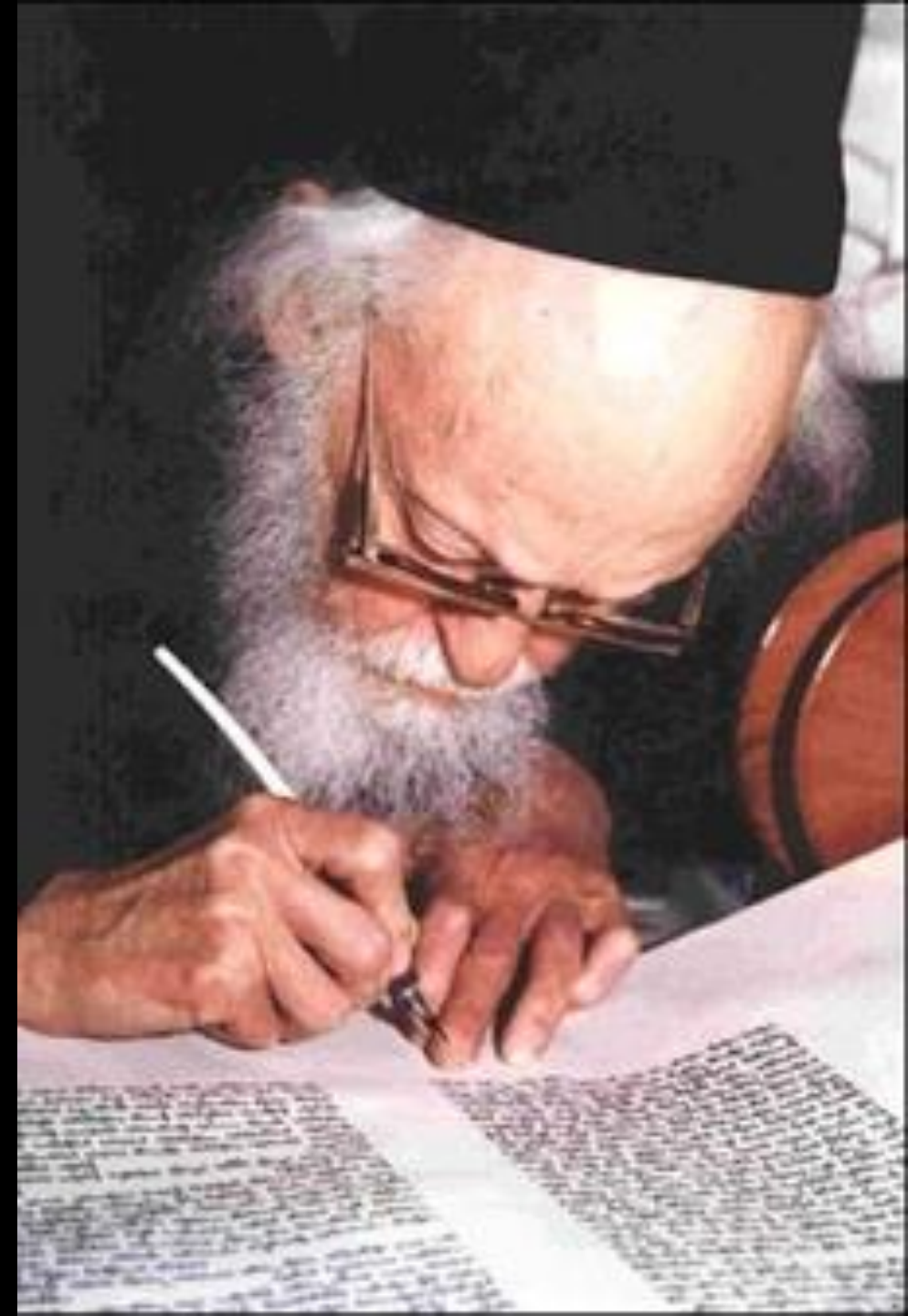
The original Hebrew Scripture included ambiguities from the ancient Hebrew language which most Jews could no longer read or understand.

These ambiguities resulted from the fact that unlike most modern languages Hebrew written text contains only consonants without vowels.

Hebrew Scripture was an Oral Tradition that was passed down from Teacher to apprentice so they would be taught how to properly pronounce each word.

To address the various interpretations of the Hebrew Bible, a group known as the Masoretes (traditionalists) defined the Hebrew Bible's vocalizations through a system of punctuation and stress marks which significantly helped to remove ambiguities due to mispronunciations.

Known as the Masoretic Text it was completed about the 9th century as the culmination of several centuries of work.



Ancient vs. Masoretic Text

Cn y rd ths.

Cn y^ard^{ea} ths.ⁱ
ou



Vowel Points



Leningrad Codex

The *Leningrad Codex* (which is kept in the Great Library of Leningrad) is one of the most important extant Hebrew documents along with the other famous biblical codex, the *Aleppo Codex*, for the study of Hebrew Scriptures.

The *Leningrad Codex*, written in 1009, is the oldest complete manuscript of the Tanakh.

This handwritten Torah scroll is written with the Masoretic vowel points, vocalizations and the musical accents that accompany each word thus assuring correct pronunciation of each word.

This Codex is the guide for all future handwritten Torahs and printed editions of Hebrew Scripture.

The Septuagint

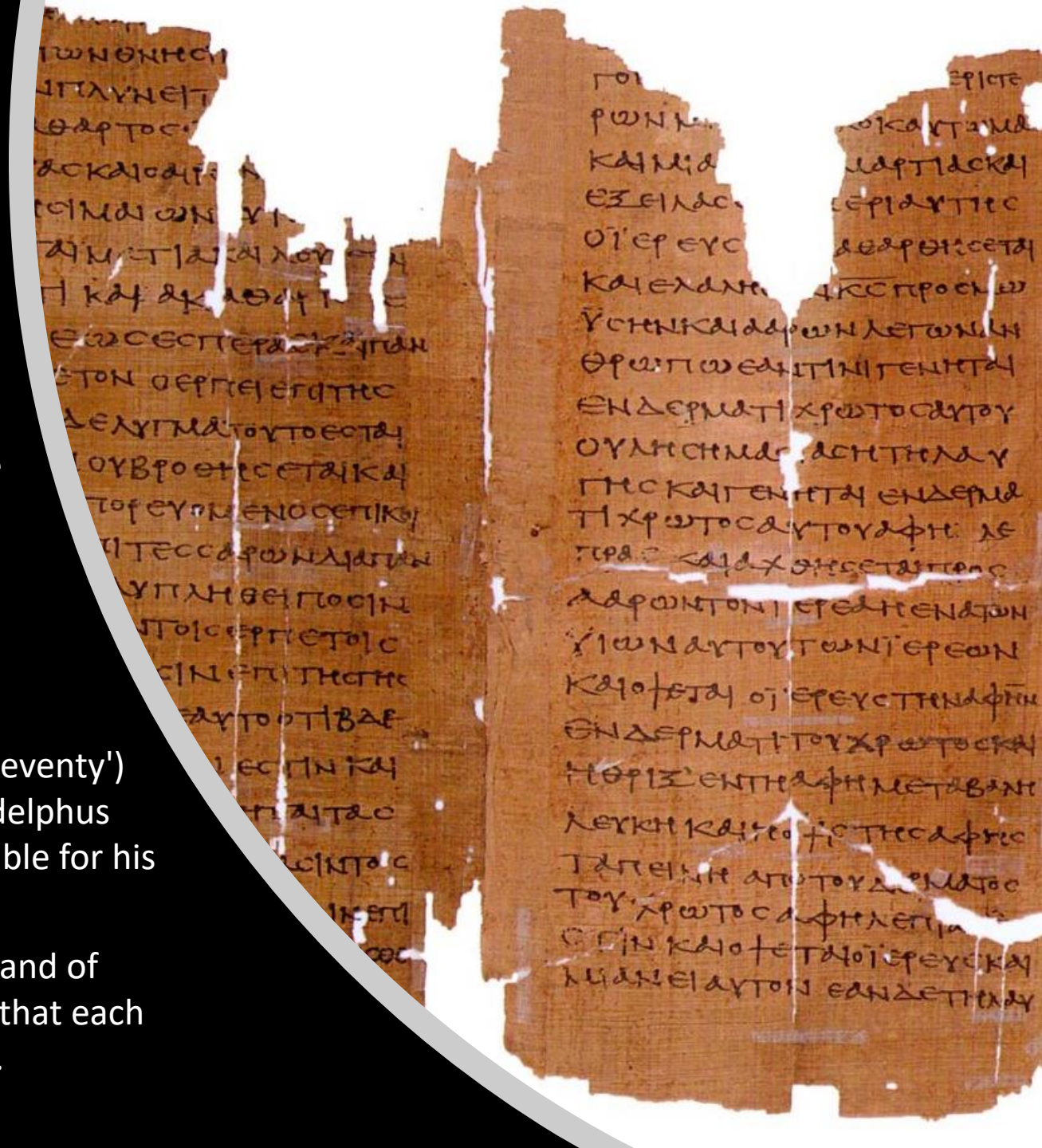
The Septuagint is *the* Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, much like the Vulgate is the Latin version of the Old and New Testament.

As Hebrew ceased to be a spoken language as early as the exilic or post-exilic period (Neh 13.24) and with the rise of Alexander the Great and the Greek empires, the Jews in the diaspora became Hellenized, and Greek became the primary language.

By the time of Christ, the common language of trade and commerce was Greek and most Jews of that time did not speak or understand liturgical Hebrew.

A popular legend of the origin of the Septuagint (Latin for 'seventy') comes from the story that the Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-246 BCE) commissioned a translation of the Hebrew Bible for his library in Alexandria.

Seventy-two translators from Jerusalem were sent to the Island of Pharos to translate the Torah into Greek and the result was that each translation was identical, proof of validity of the translation.



The SEPTUAGINT (LXX)

- The actual truth is a bit more dull as the Septuagint is actually a collection of Greek translations completed about the 3rd century BC During the reign of King Ptolemy.
- Even so, the Church maintains that the LXX was made under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- The LXX was the text most often (but not exclusively) quoted by the writers of the New Testament when they referred to *Scripture*.
- As with any translation in the LXX, there are places where the wording differs from the original Hebrew intent.



Dead Sea Scrolls

Ancient manuscripts found near the western shore of the Dead Sea, with the most important near Qumran, where eleven caves containing scrolls and artifacts were discovered from 1946 to 1956.

At least 941 scrolls were discovered in the Qumran caves and are dated to between 250 BC and 68 AD, when the site was destroyed by the Romans.

The scrolls were written in the three languages of Scripture

- 548 in Hebrew
- 137 in Aramaic
- 5 in Greek

The three books most commonly found at Qumran are Psalms (36 scrolls), Deuteronomy (30), and Isaiah (21).



The Septuagint Additions

LAW

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

PROPHETS

Former Prophets
Joshua
Judges
1-2 Samuel
1-2 Kings

Latter Prophets
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Ezekiel
The Twelve

WRITINGS

Pre-Exilic Writings
Psalms
Job
Proverbs
Ruth
Song of Songs
Ecclesiastes

Post-Exilic Writings
Lamentations
Esther
Daniel
Ezra-Nehemiah
1-2 Chronicles

Tobit

Judith

1 Esdras

[Prayer of Manasseh]

Baruch

Epistle of Jeremiah

1 Maccabees

2 Maccabees

[3 Maccabees]

[4 Maccabees]

Ecclesiasticus

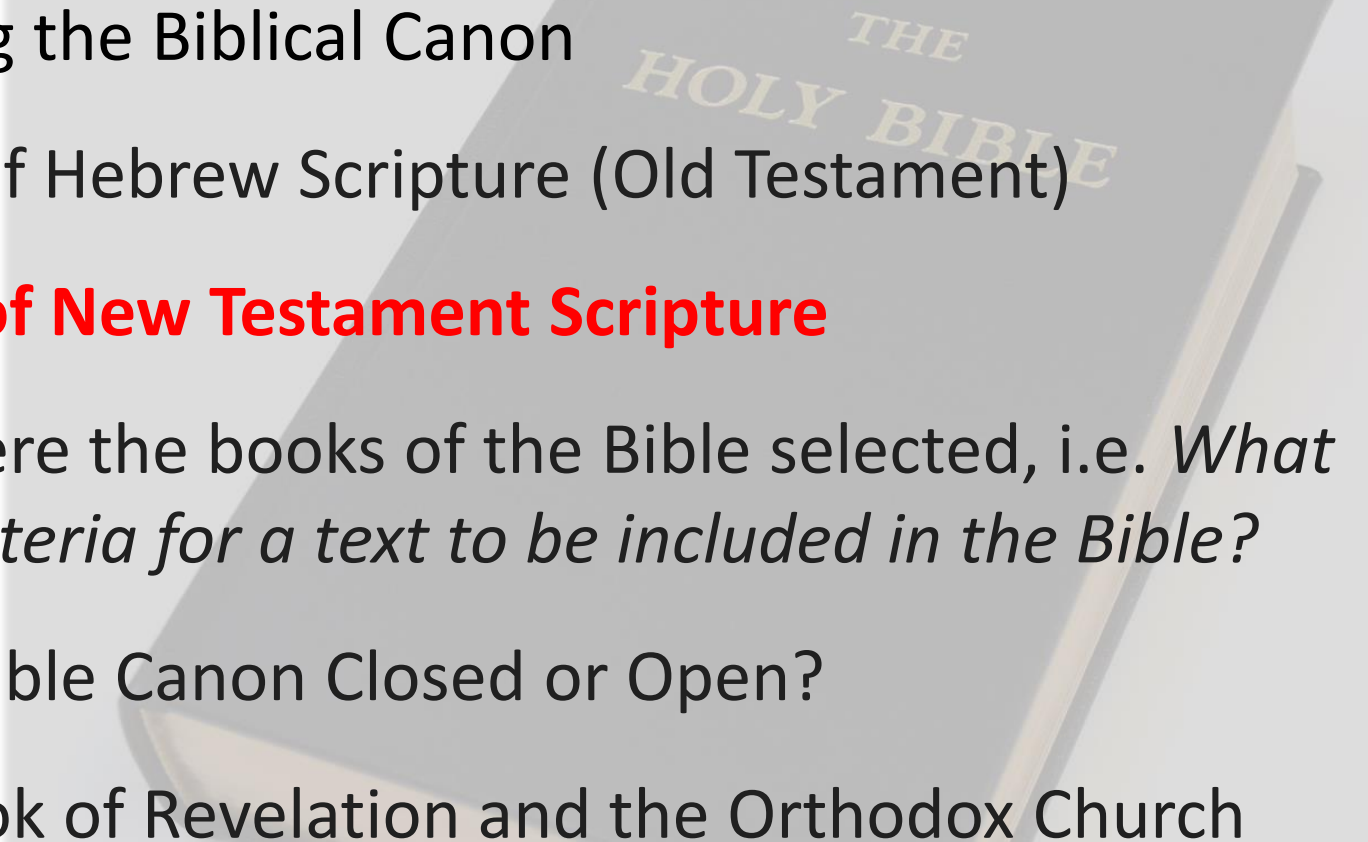
[Odes]

Wisdom of Solomon

[Psalms of Solomon]



OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon
 2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)
 - 3. Origin of New Testament Scripture**
 4. How were the books of the Bible selected, i.e. *What are the criteria for a text to be included in the Bible?*
 5. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?
 6. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church
- 

Apostolic Times - Oral Tradition of the Church

Just as it was for the Jews, the first Christians, spread the Christian faith through Oral Tradition which was recited when they gathered for worship.

As the Church grew letters written by the Apostles would be copied and repeated. These letters spoke to the Christian beliefs about the life, death and promises of Jesus Christ.

This Oral Tradition is supported in the Bible.

John 21:25

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

1 Corinthians 11:2

Now I commend you for remembering me in everything and for maintaining the traditions, just as I passed them on to you.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

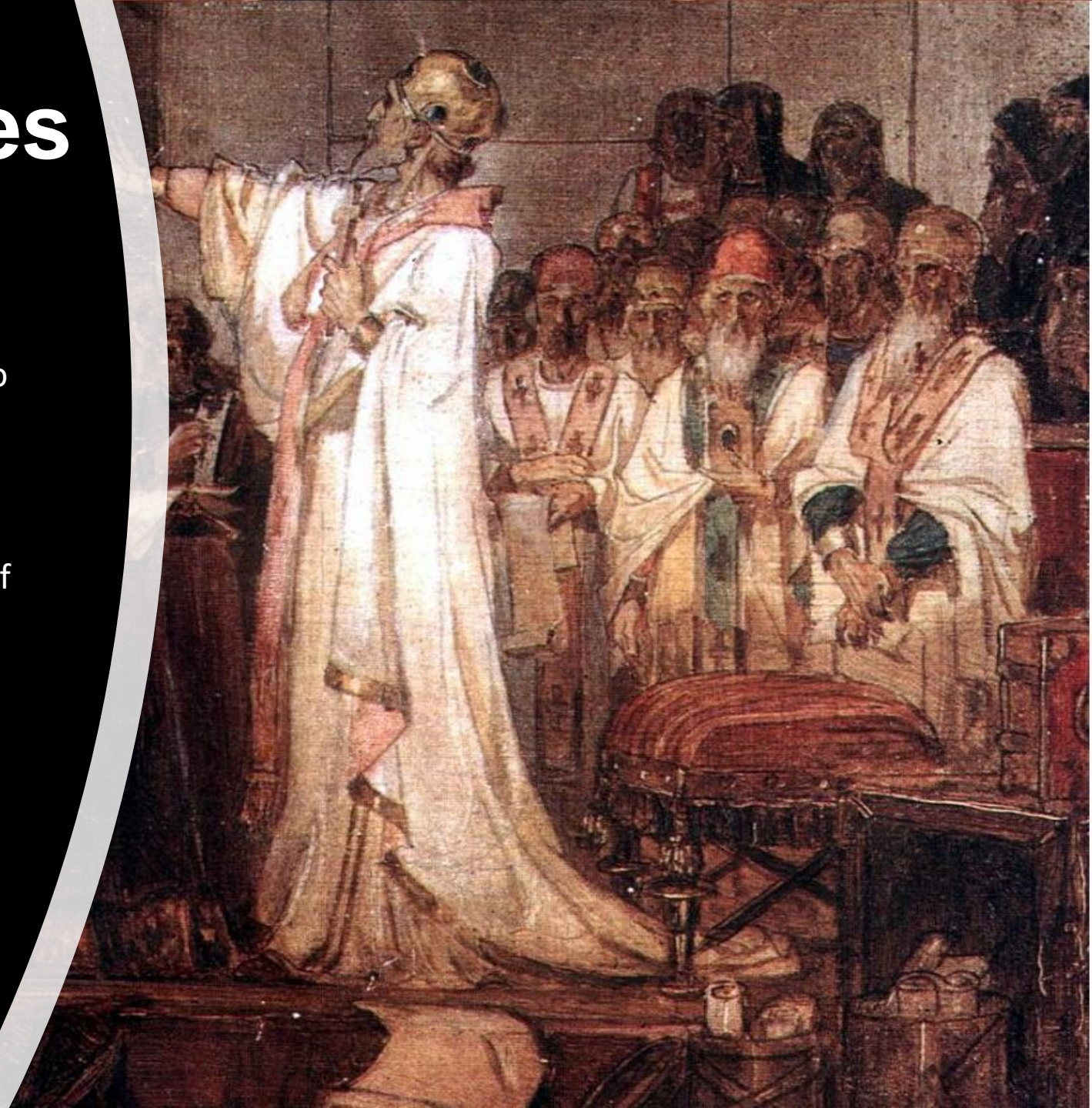


Post-Apostolic Times

By the middle of the 2nd century there are a great many different writings circulating each claiming to have divine authority and each claiming to offer the Truth.

These documents begin circulating among the various Christian churches and become a subject of urgent debate among church leaders of the time.

By the end of the century it is widely agreed that four Gospels, the *Epistles* of Paul and the *Acts of the Apostles* were authentic. And valid to be read during worship services.



The Beginnings of a Biblical Canon

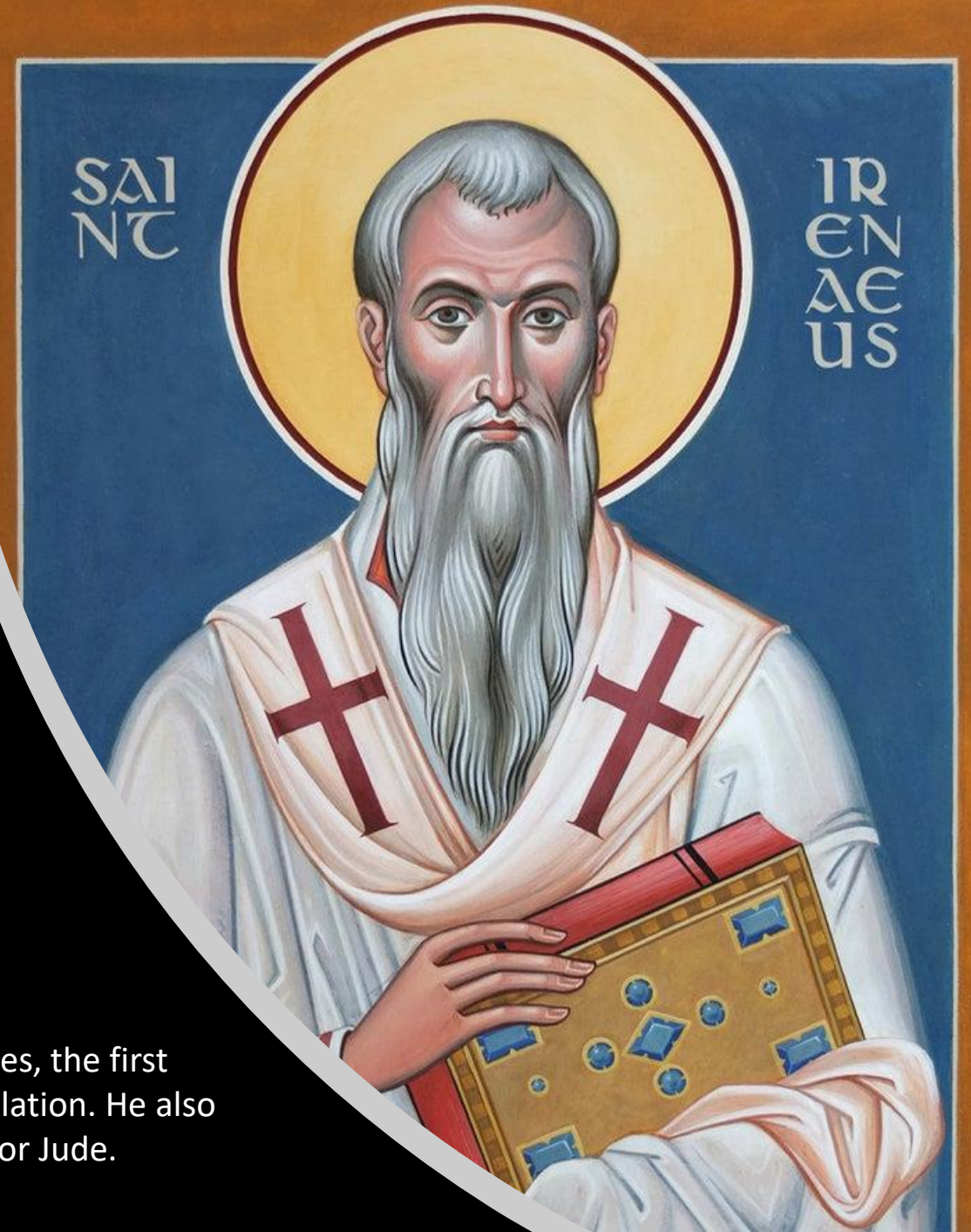
Irenaeus of Lyon (150-202AD) referred directly to the four gospels in his work, *Against the Heresies*, in which he denounced various early Christian groups that used only one gospel, such as Marcionism.

For him, the four Gospels were the four "*Pillars of the Church*" and he made the analogy of the four corners of the earth and the four winds taken from Ezekiel 1.

Irenaeus saw the Gospel of John as a lens through which to read *Matthew, Mark and Luke*.

Based on the arguments Irenaeus made in support of only four authentic gospels, some interpreters deduce that there was "*a powerful indication that the fourfold Gospel contemporaneously sponsored by Irenaeus was not broadly, let alone universally, recognized.*"

In addition to the four gospels, Irenaeus mentions Acts, the Pauline epistles, the first epistle of Peter, and the 1st and 2nd epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. He also refers to Hebrews, James and 2 Peter but does not cite Philemon, 3 John or Jude.



St Athanasios' 39th Festal Letter to the Egyptian Churches – 367 AD

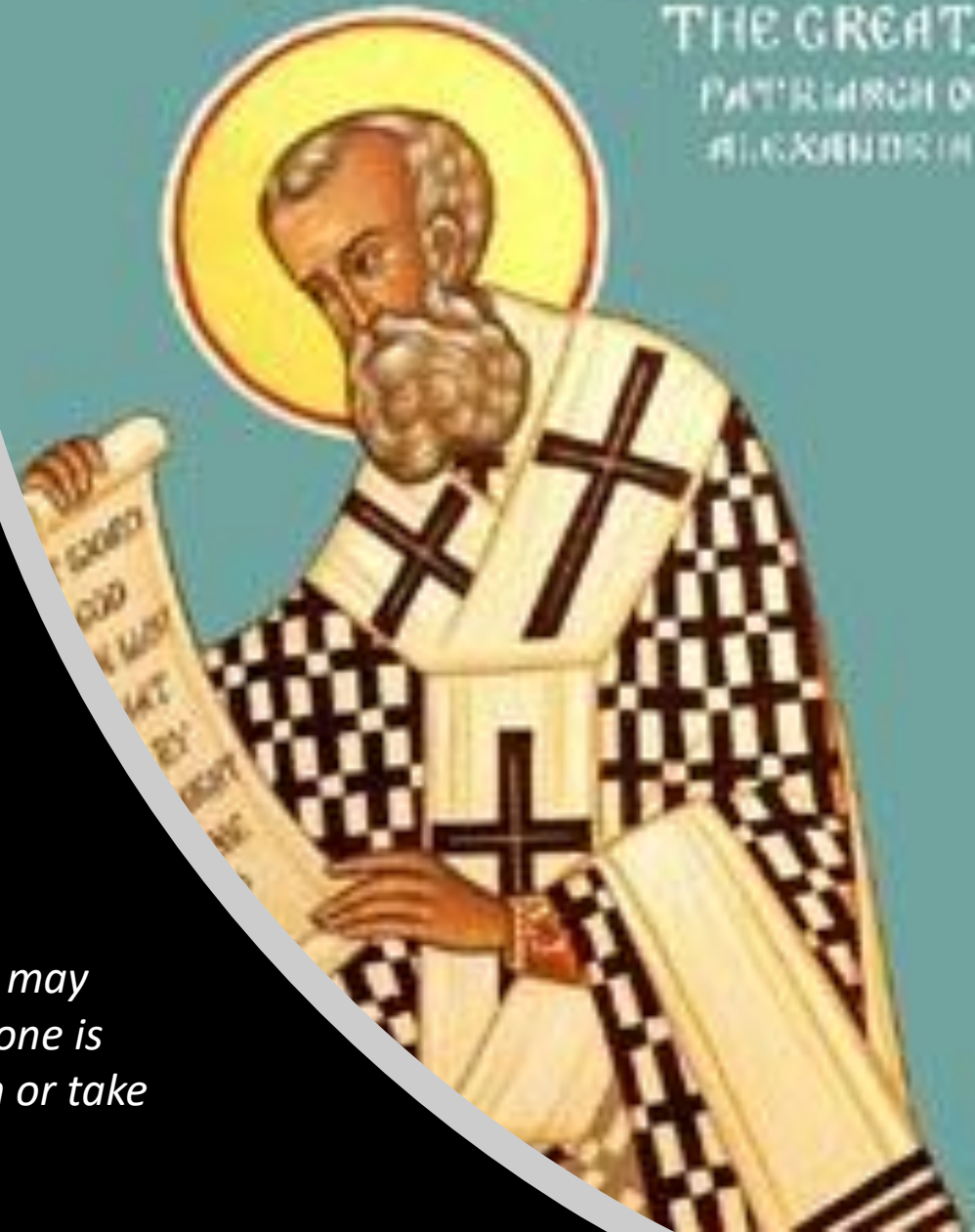
“Continuing, I must without hesitation mention the scriptures of the New Testament; they are the following:

- *the four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*
- *the Acts of the Apostles*
- *the seven so-called catholic epistles of the apostles -- namely, one of James, two of Peter, then three of John and after these one of Jude.*
- *the 14 epistles of the apostle Paul written in the following order:*
Romans, then two to the Corinthians and then after these the one to the Galatians, following it the one to the Ephesians, thereafter the one to the Philippians and the one to the Colossians and two to the Thessalonians and the epistle to the Hebrews and then immediately two to Timothy, one to Titus and lastly the one to Philemon.
- *Yet further the Revelation of John (although this book's place in the canon of the Orthodox Church was debated until the 10th century).”*

“These are the springs of salvation, in order that he who is thirsty may fully refresh himself with the words contained in them. In them alone is the doctrine of piety proclaimed. Let no one add anything to them or take anything away from them.”

ST. ATHANASIUS

THE GREAT,
Patriarch of
ALEXANDRIA



Third Council of Carthage (A.D. 397)

It was also determined that besides the Canonical Scriptures nothing is to be read in the Church under the title of divine Scriptures other than these Canonical Scriptures.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, and two books of Paraleipomena,

Job, the Psalter, five books of Solomon, the books of the twelve prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Daniel, Tobit, Judith, Esther, two books of Esdras, two books of the Maccabees.

Of the New Testament

four books of the Gospels, one book of the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul, one epistle to the Hebrews, two Epistles of the Apostle Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude, and one book of the Apocalypse of John.

Let this be made known also to our brother and fellow-priest Boniface, or to other bishops of those parts, for the purpose of confirming that Canon. because we have received from our fathers that those books must be read in the Church.



The Luther Canon (1522)

This is the biblical canon attributed to Martin Luther, which has influenced Protestants since the Protestant Reformation.

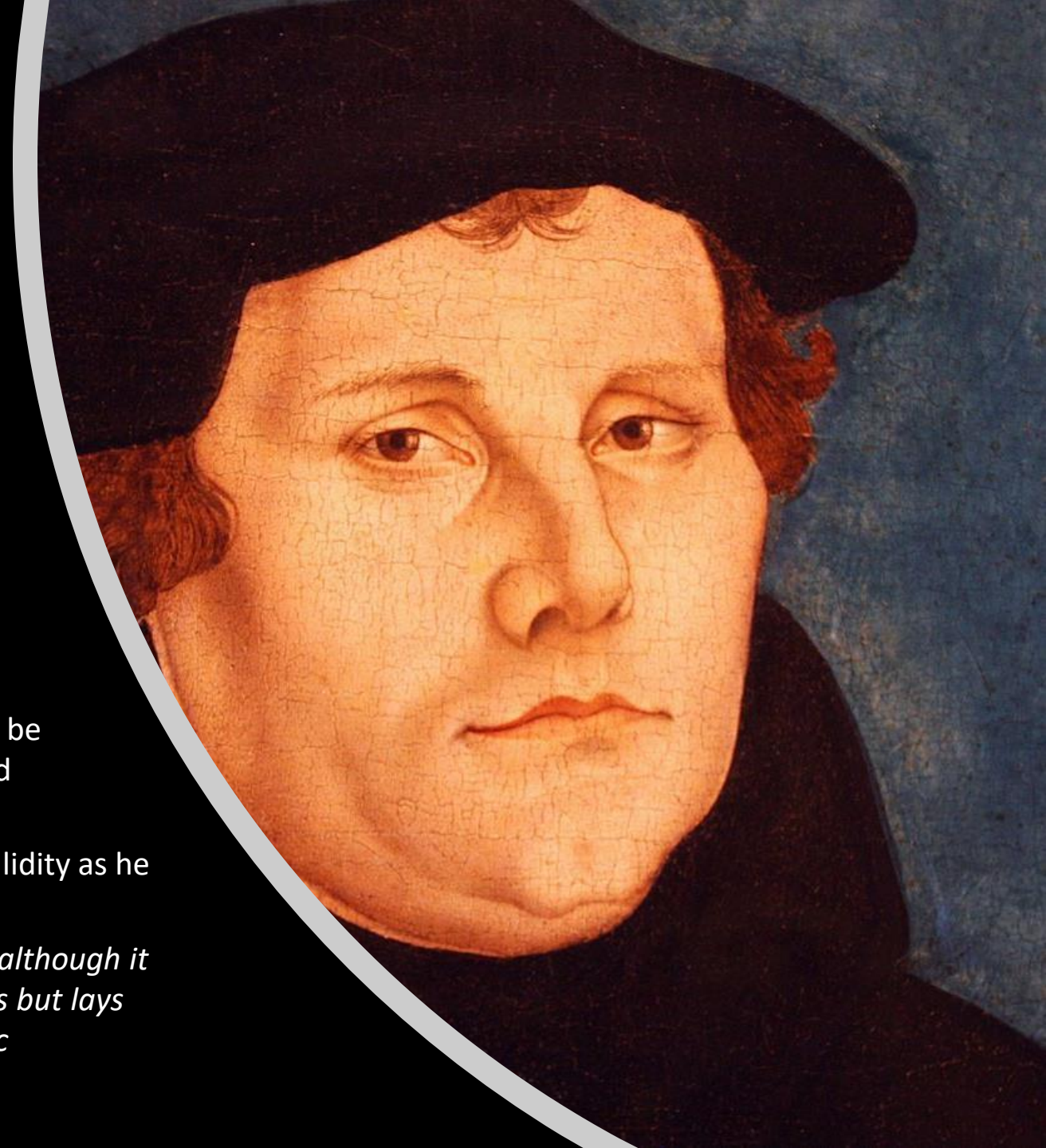
While the Lutheran Confessions specifically did not define a canon, it is widely regarded as the canon of the Lutheran Church.

This “canon” differed from the Roman Catholic canon put forth in the Council of Trent in that it rejects the deuterocanonical books and questions the seven New Testament books.

Luther considered Hebrews, James, Jude, and the Revelation to be "disputed books" which he included in his translation but placed separately at the end in his 1522 New Testament.

Luther's comments focused on doctrinal value, not canonical validity as he stated;

"I think highly of the epistle of James, and regard it as valuable although it was rejected in early days. It does not expound human doctrines but lays much emphasis on God's law. ...I do not hold it to be of apostolic authorship."



Council of Trent (1546)

Prompted by the Reformation, The **Canon of Trent** is the list of books officially considered canonical for the Roman Catholic Church decreed at the Council of Trent.

The Council confirmed an identical list already approved by the Council of Florence (1442) and the Synods of Carthage.

The list confirmed that the deuterocanonical books were on a par with the other books of the canon in defense against Luther who placed these books in the Apocrypha of his canon).

It also affirmed Jerome's Latin translation, the Vulgate, to be authoritative for the text of Scripture, contrary to Protestant views that the Greek and Hebrew texts were more authoritative.



Synod of Jerusalem (1672)

The **Synod of Jerusalem** was convened by Orthodox Patriarch Dositheos in 1672. The Synod was attended by most of the prominent representatives of the Orthodox Church, including six Metropolitans

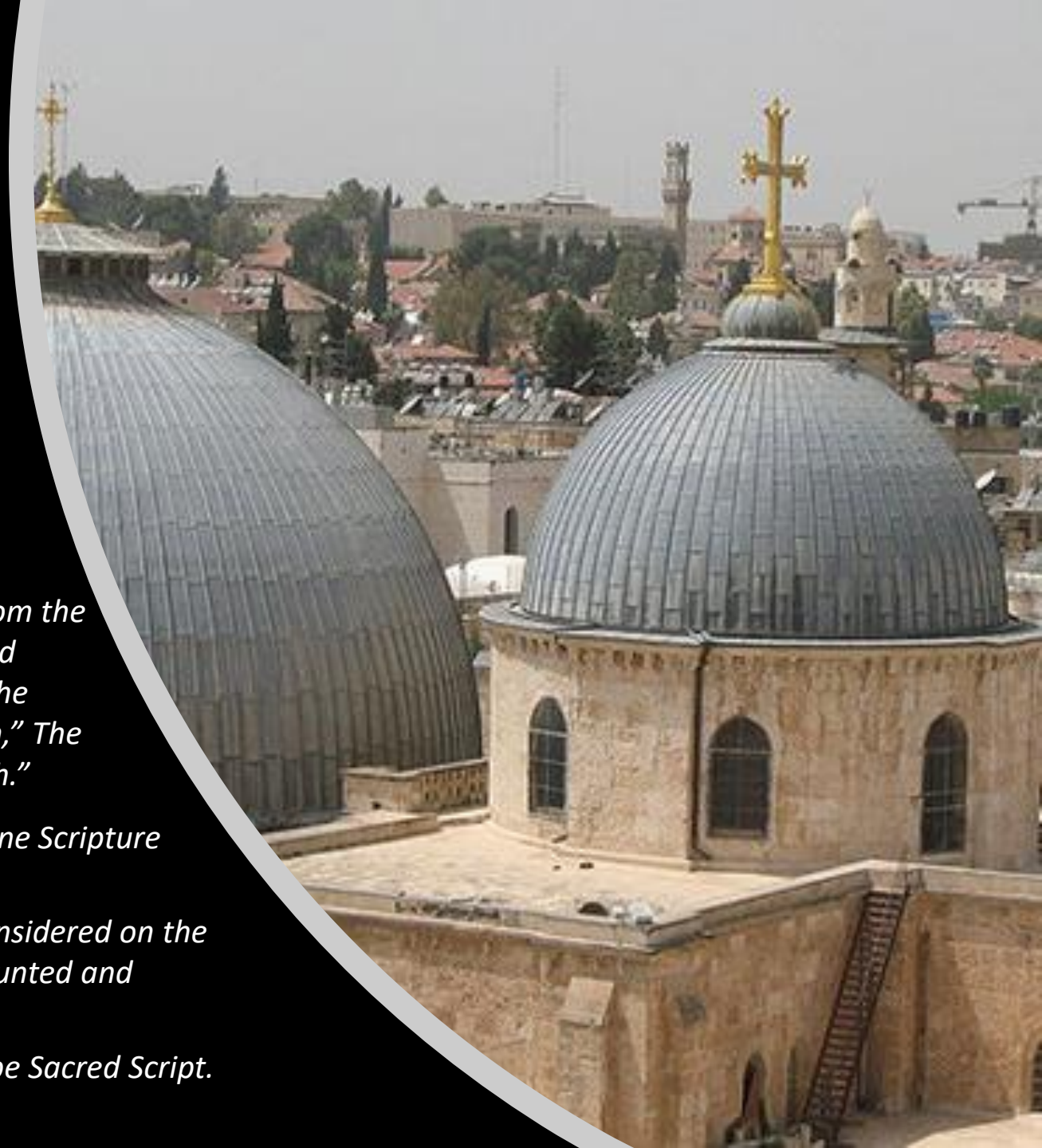
Its decrees received universal acceptance as an expression of the faith of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

We call Sacred Scripture all those which Cyril [Lucaris] collected from the Synod of Laodicea, adding to Scripture those which he foolishly and ignorantly, or rather maliciously, called Apocrypha; specifically, "The Wisdom of Solomon," "Judith," "Tobit," "The History of the Dragon," The History of Susanna," "The Maccabees," and "The Wisdom of Sirach."

For we judge these also to be with the other genuine Books of Divine Scripture genuine parts of Scripture.

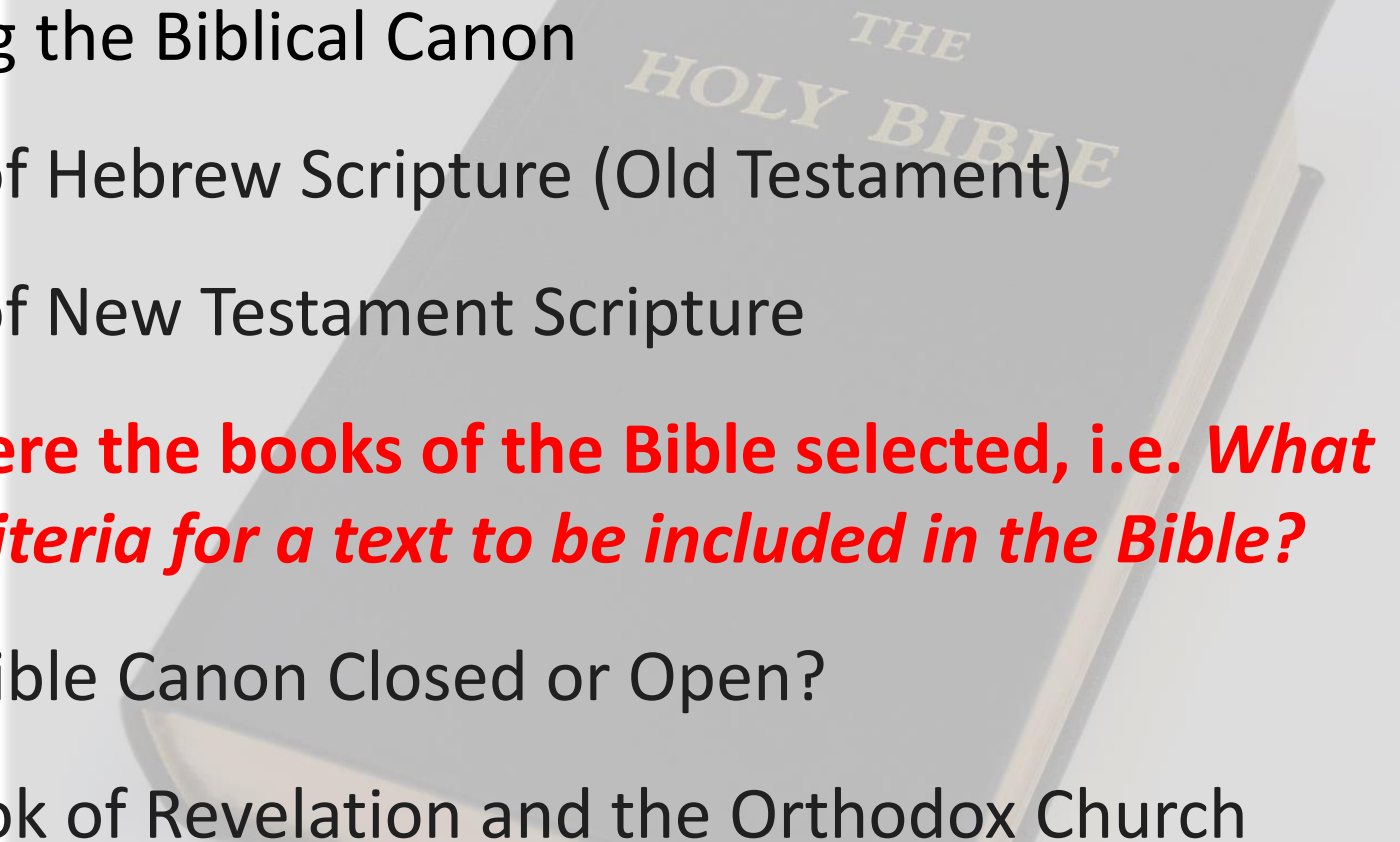
And if, perhaps, it seems that not always have all of these been considered on the same level as the others, yet nevertheless these also have been counted and reckoned with the rest of Scripture...

All of these we judge to be Canonical Books, and confess them to be Sacred Script.





OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon
 2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)
 3. Origin of New Testament Scripture
 - 4. How were the books of the Bible selected, i.e. *What are the criteria for a text to be included in the Bible?***
 5. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?
 6. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church
- 



Catholic Criteria for Canonicity

1. ***Apostolic Origin*** - attributed to and/or based on the preaching/teaching of the first-generation apostles (or their closest companions).
2. ***Universal Acceptance*** - acknowledged by all major Christian communities in the Mediterranean world (by the end of the fourth century).
3. ***Liturgical Use*** - read publicly along with the OT when the Early Church gathered for the Lord's Supper.
4. ***Consistent Message*** - containing theological ideas compatible with other accepted Christian writings.



Protestant Criteria for Canonicity

In general Protestants use the same four "Criteria for Canonicity" to justify the selection of the books included in the New Testament:

- Apostolic Origin—attributed to the teaching of the first-generation apostles (or their close companions).
- Universal Acceptance—acknowledged by all major Christian communities in the ancient world.
- Liturgical Use—read publicly when early Christian communities gathered for their worship services.
- Consistent Message—containing a theological outlook similar or complementary to other accepted Christian writings.

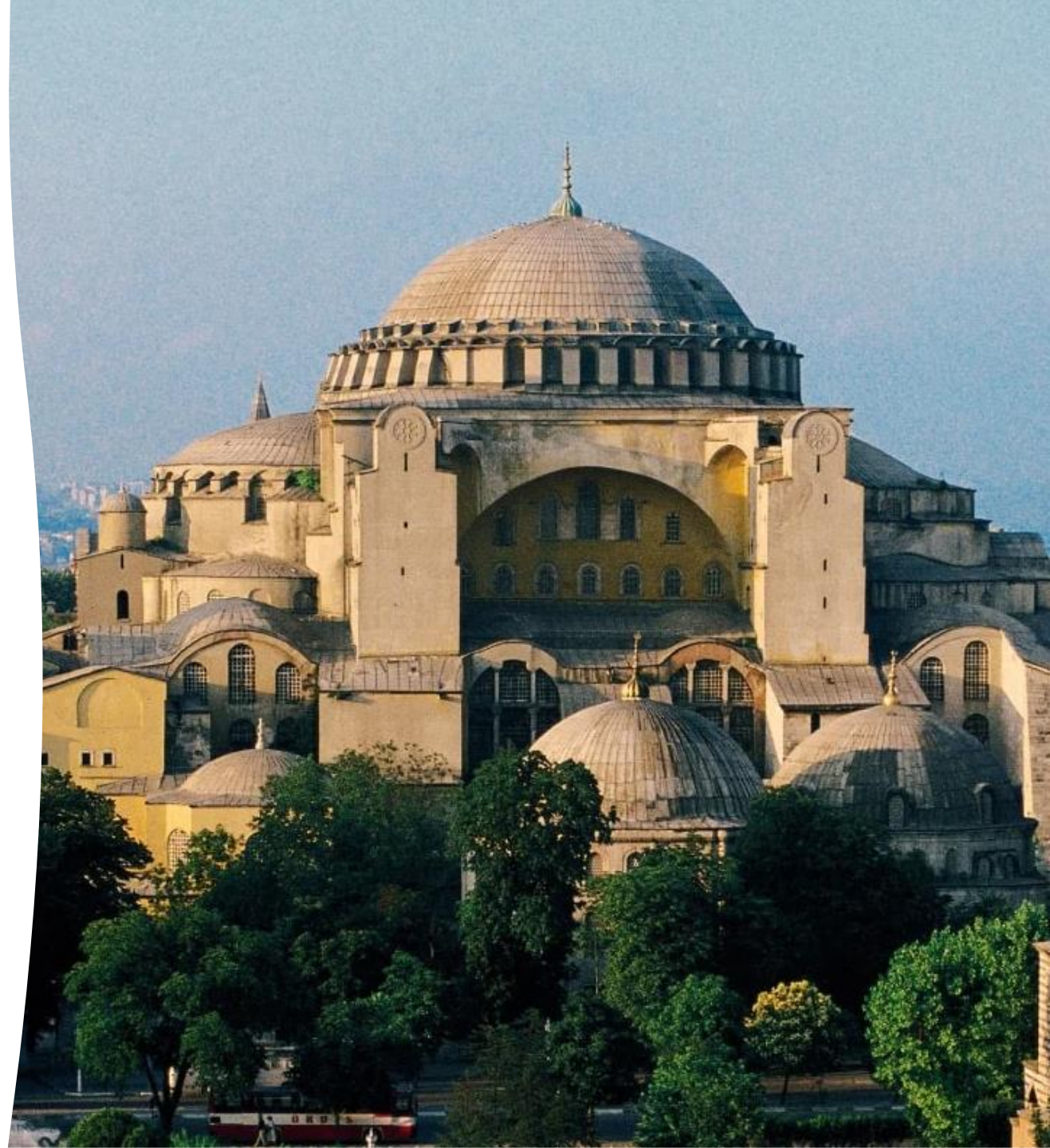
The basic factor for recognizing a book's canonicity for the New Testament was divine inspiration, and the chief test for this was *apostolicity*.

The term *apostolic* as used for the test of canonicity does not necessarily mean apostolic authorship or derivation, but rather *apostolic authority*.

Orthodox Criteria for Canonicity

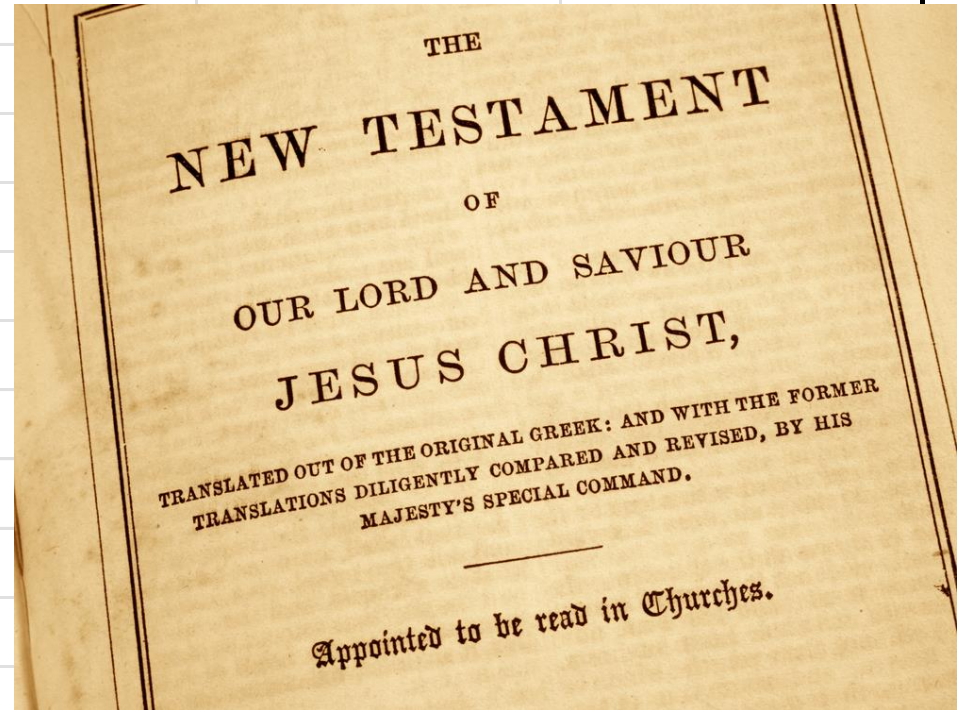
The following, while similar to Catholic and Protestant criteria, represent a general agreement among Orthodox regarding what makes a text valid (canonical) for the Church.

- Apostolic authority (which required that the book have been written by an apostle, by someone associated with an
- Have come from the Apostolic Age.
- Conforms to Orthodoxy Tradition.
- Regular liturgical use widely accepted for a long time and in many places.
- That which is necessary for salvation.



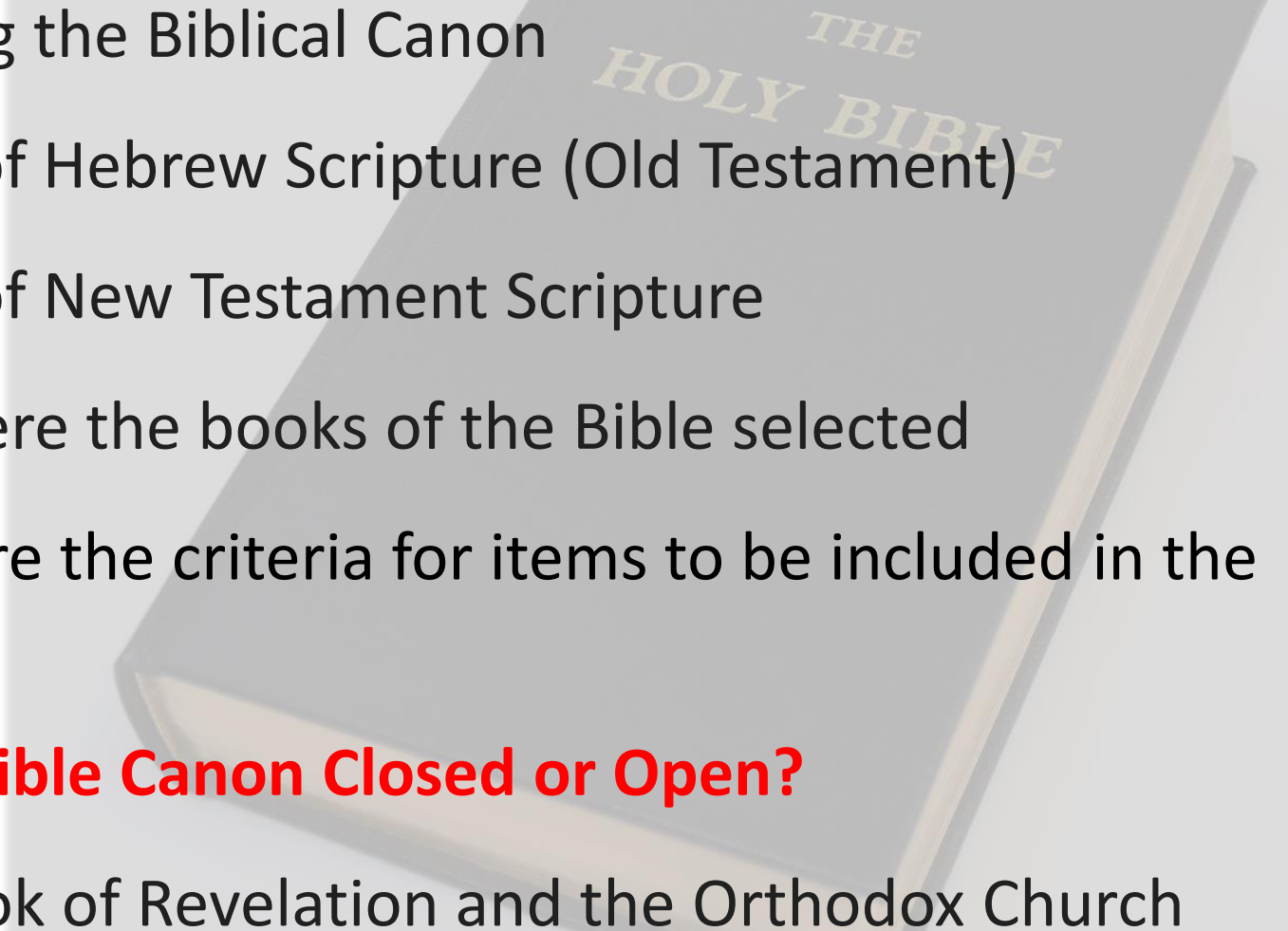
List of the Accepted Books of the New Testament

PAULINE	JOHANNIE	SYNOPTIC	PETRINE	UNIVERSAL	APOCALYPTIC
Romans	John	Matthew	1 Peter	Acts	Revelation
1 Corinthians	1 John	Mark	2 Peter	James	
2 Corinthians	2 John	Luke		Jude	
Galatians	3 John				
Ephesians					
Philippians					
Colossians					
1 Thessalonians					
2 Thessalonians					
1 Timothy					
2 Timothy					
Titus					
Philemon					
Hebrews					





OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon
 2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)
 3. Origin of New Testament Scripture
 4. How were the books of the Bible selected
 5. What are the criteria for items to be included in the Bible?
 - 6. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?**
 7. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church
- 

Closing of the Canon of Scripture

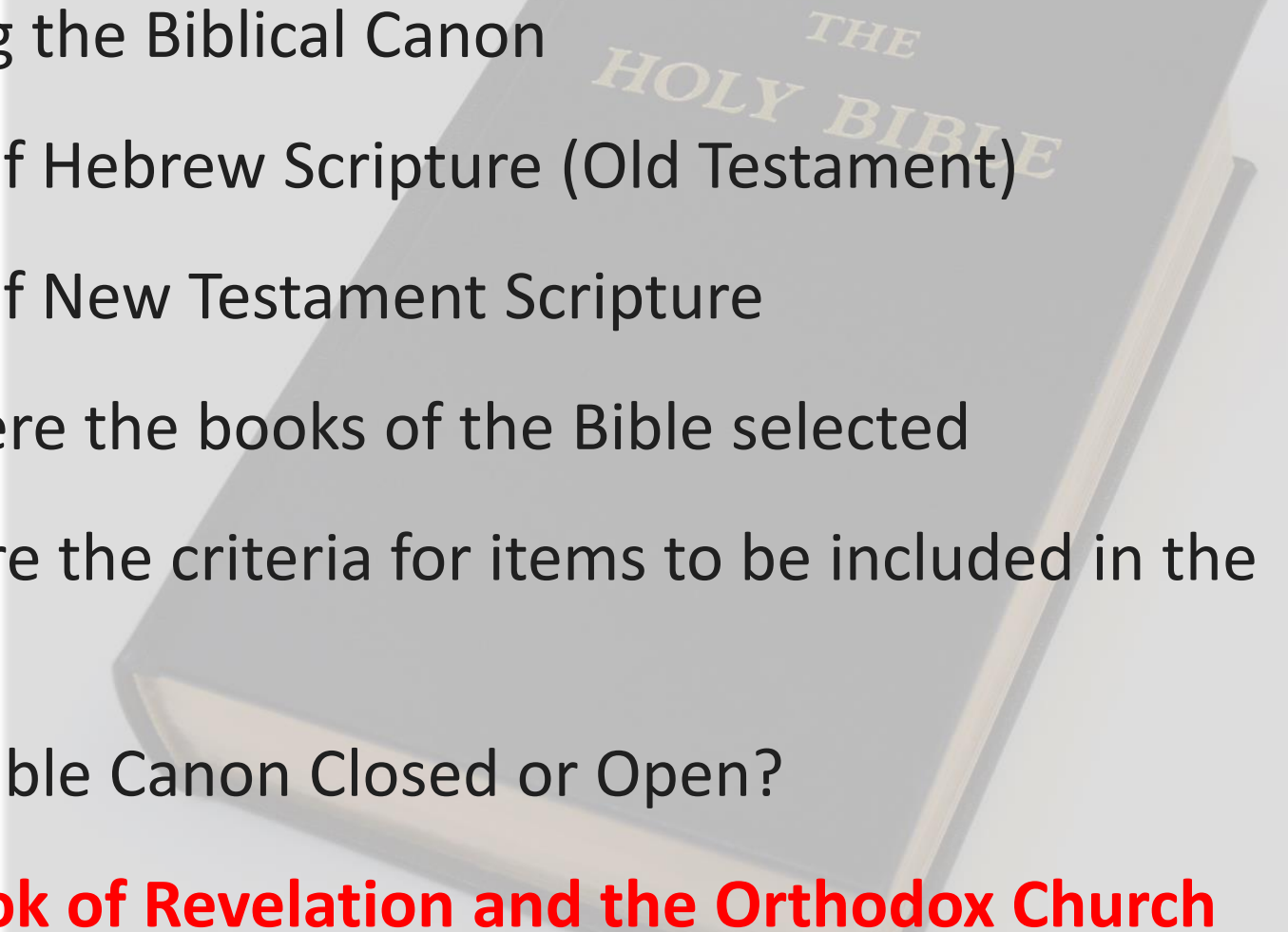
- For the **Roman Catholic Church**, the Canon of Scripture was officially closed at the Council of Trent of 1546

The holy ecumenical and general Council of Trent, ... following the example of the orthodox Fathers receives and venerates all the books of the Old and New Testament ... and also the traditions pertaining to faith and conduct ... with an equal sense of devotion and reverence.... If, however, anyone does not receive these books in their entirety, with all their parts as they are accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and are contained in the ancient Latin Vulgate edition as sacred and canonical, and knowingly and deliberately rejects the aforesaid traditions, let him be Anathema.

- For the **Protestant Church**, although there were earlier statements, The Thirty-Nine Articles, issued by the Church of England in 1563, names the books of the Old Testament, but not the New Testament.
- For the **Orthodox Church** some see the closing of the Biblical Canon as occurring at the Synod of Jerusalem of 1672. However, this was a recognition of the sacredness of certain Scriptural texts but not a closing of the canon of Scripture. Therefore, the canon of Scripture remains “open” for the Orthodox Church. This is in part due to the dissimilar methods of the various autocephalous Orthodox Churches. Another important factor is the idea that “codification” conflicts with the spiritual essence of Orthodoxy.



OUTLINE

1. Defining the Biblical Canon
 2. Origin of Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament)
 3. Origin of New Testament Scripture
 4. How were the books of the Bible selected
 5. What are the criteria for items to be included in the Bible?
 6. Is the Bible Canon Closed or Open?
 - 7. The Book of Revelation and the Orthodox Church**
- 

Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation is an example of apocalyptic literature that predicts a final celestial war through prophecy. It has been dated to around 95 A.D. It is believed to have been written by St. John on the island Patmos as a revelation from God.

There are several reasons for the Orthodox Church's hesitancy to accept Revelation as part of the Biblical Canon.

1. The complex and confusing nature of the text. Evidence of this is Evangelical Christians who spend time interpreting current events in expectation of the End Times creating theologies such as **Millennialism**.
2. The Orthodox Church does not believe the text contains any specific salvific content not found in the other accepted writings.
3. There is the thought among some Biblical scholars that the text is less a future prophecy and more a response to the Roman destruction of the Great Temple and Jerusalem.
4. The grammar and style of the text of Revelation is different from the Gospel of John questioning the authorship.

